The Raven

Thinking It Over

1. In one of his essays, Poe told how he wrote “The Raven”. He wanted to write a poem with a tone of sadness. What things about the poem do you think were intended to give it a tone of sadness?
2. Poe’s Poems are famous because of the sound of the words he used. After you have read “The Raven” silently a few times, try reading it out loud. Do you like it better when you actually hear it, or when you just read it? Why?
3. Several kinds of birds can be trained to mimic human speech. Why do you think Poe chose to use a raven instead of a parrot, for example? Would the tone of sadness remain if you used parrot instead of raven in the poem?

Source: An Edgar Allen Poe Reader (poems and short stories). Globe Book Company, INC. New York / Chicago / Cleveland. Second Edition 1984.